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HOUSEKEEPERS' CHAT

Friday, January 20, 1933

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Subject: "Dinner for Sunday." Information from the Bureau of Home Economics,  
U. S. D. A.

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Suppose your telephone began ringing early in the morning. And suppose a lady on the other end of the wire was calling for a menu. Suppose she told you she wanted a menu for a Sunday dinner, a simple dinner yet one that would do for company. Finally, suppose she added that she would like this to be a Southern-style dinner. There are the specifications. What would you suggest for a Sunday dinner Southern style?

When the Menu Specialist heard about that telephone call, she said, "What about chicken fricassee? That's a good Southern dish."

Fricassee is one of those famous stews we were talking about last week. A fricassee is really a brown stew made of fowl, rabbit or some other small animal. The French invented the dish, but it's a great favorite in this country, especially in the South. You brown the pieces of meat in a frying pan, cover them with water, simmer until tender and serve with gravy. A fowl too old for roasting or frying will make a good fricassee. You just simmer it until the meat is tender. Long slow cooking with moisture is the rule for making fowl or other meat tender.

Here are the simple directions for making a tip-top chicken fricassee: Cut a fowl into pieces for serving. Sprinkle with salt and pepper. Roll in flour. Brown in hot fat. Now transfer the chicken to a kettle. Add enough water to cover it. And simmer until tender. Remove the chicken from the broth, but keep it hot while you make the gravy. For the gravy, blend two or three tablespoons of flour with some of the chicken broth, combine it with the rest, and stir it until thickened. Add more salt when needed. Serve on a hot platter.

There's the chicken fricassee all made. A very simple dish, you see, made on the same principal as brown stew of beef or any of the other stews in which the meat is first browned in fat and then simmered in water until tender.

But we haven't yet planned the rest of our Sunday dinner. Sweet potatoes certainly belong on a Southern style menu. So let's have mashed sweet potatoes baked with marshmallows on top to go with the fricassee. Mashed sweet potatoes put in a baking dish with marshmallows for a top layer. That's an easy dish with a dressy look. Nice for company. The marshmallows brown very quickly in the oven, so be careful to watch them.

Next we want a green vegetable. Buttered greens, perhaps? Or broccoli, green cabbage, kale or any other green vegetable on the market. If you don't find these in your market, a canned green vegetable will be next best. You might serve canned peas or green beans.



To add crispness to the meal, what could be nicer than crisp pieces of celery? Some tart firm jelly will add color and flavor. I vote for red currant jelly or cranberry jelly or tart apple jelly. Any one of these will suit this meal. Then, of course, you'll want hot biscuits. You can bake these right in the oven with the sweet potatoes. For dessert, let's plan a one-egg cake served fresh from the oven with hot fruit sauce.

Let's go over the menu once again to be sure we have everything. And then let's talk about preparing some of the good green vegetables on the winter market. The menu: Chicken fricassee; Mashed sweet potatoes baked with marshmallows on top; a green vegetable; Tart firm jelly; Celery; Hot biscuits; Cake with fruit sauce.

Fortunately for us, more and more green vegetables are available on the market in winter. Beside lettuce, spinach and cabbage, you'll often find various kinds of greens as well as the more unusual vegetables like kale, Swiss chard and kohlrabi.

I've heard broccoli called "green cauliflower." Certainly it is a relative of cauliflower and one of the few flowers that we eat. If you prepare and cook broccoli properly, few vegetables can equal it. You cook it in boiling water and serve it immediately with melted butter or Hollandaise sauce. But the real problem in preparing this vegetable is this. The stalks are more fibrous and therefore require longer cooking than the delicate flower heads. If you cook the stalks until they are tender, the flower heads <sup>are</sup> almost sure to go to pieces. So trim off and discard the leaves and the tough lower portions of the stalks. Then wash the remaining center stalks with the flower heads attached and cut the stalks lengthwise into strips. When the stalks are divided this way, they'll cook tender in a shorter time. Now drop them into lightly salted boiling water, leave the kettle uncovered, and cook for 15 to 25 minutes. As soon as the broccoli is tender, and while the color is still fresh green, drain the broccoli, season it with salt and pepper to taste, and add melted butter or serve with Hollandaise sauce.

Kohlrabi is another relative of the cabbage. It is often called the turnip cabbage. How to fix it? Very easy. Trim off the leaves, pare the kohlrabi and slice crosswise. Cook in lightly salted boiling water for about 20 minutes in an uncovered pan, drain, season with melted butter or cream and salt and pepper.

For Monday, we'll talk about the good dishes you can make from peanuts and peanut butter, and we'll have a recipe for peanut loaf.

